like the Mankhurd-Belapur. Construction of that railway line has been taken up by the SIDCO in collaboration with the Railways. I would like to know: if such a proposal is sent by the Government of Gujarat, would the Railway Ministry consider it?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): That is a hypothetical question. As and when such a proposal raises, we will definitely consider it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You will give due consideration.

श्री माधवराव सिंधिया : जी ?

श्री सभापति : आप ड्यू कंसीडरेशन देंगे ?

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: When they send it, then, consideration can be given.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Q. No. 103.

Constitution of the Dock Labour Board for Paradip Port

*103. SHRI BASUDEB MOHAPATRA: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) what are the reasons for not constituting the Dock Labour Board for Paradip Port;

(b) what steps have been taken to protect the interests of listed and unlisted workers engaged in loading and unloading operations in the Port;

(c) whether it is a fact that a private pool for unlisted workers has been formed;

(d) if so, who is the agent of the pool and in what manner Paradip Port authorities deal with the agent regarding payments of dues concerning workers; and

(e) what amount has been paid to the agent during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJESH PILOT): (a) to (e) A statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Statement

(a) In order to eliminate the dichotomy in the cargo handling labour and to ensure their integration and better utilisation, it was decided not to constitute a Dock Labour Board in Paradip.

(b) and (c) A scheme was framed by the Paradip Port Trust in February, 1980 under which the Listed workers in the Main List are eligible for certain benefits such as minimum guaranteed wages, attendance allowance, Contributory Provident Fund Gratuity etc. The Listed workers in the Subisdiary List are however, not eligible for the above benefits. The unlisted clearing and forwarding workers are under a private pool which was formed in May, 1984. These workers get wages for days of work, attendance allowance, holiday wages etc.

(d) The private pool of clearing and forwarding workers is jointly managed by representatives of the clearing and forwarding agents and the Unions. Paradip Port authorities are not connected with the payments to the workers.

(e) Paradip Port Trust has not made any payment to the private pool or its agents.

SHRI BASUDEB MOHAPATRA: Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to part (b), (c), (d) and (e) of his answer where he has stated that only unlisted clearing and forwarding workers are under a private pool which was formed in May, 1984. Though

these workers get wages for their work, allowances and travelling facilities, still they are treated as unlisted workers and they are under a private pool. May I know from the hon. Minister why they are not being treated as listed workers and extended the benefits given to the listed workers? Previously the hon. Minister has given the number of listed workers as 1,498 and that of unlisted workers as 1,428. I am unable to understand as to why they are maintaining two lists, one is main list and other subsidiary list at the Paradip Port.

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: Mr. Chairman, Sir, at the Paradip Port the Dock Labour Board has not yet been constituted. We have two types of workers there. One is listed and they are called Paradip Cargo Handling Workers Regulation Pool and another one is unlisted and they are called Clearing and Forwarding Handling Workers Pool. This demand has been coming from them also. But when you list them in the regular list we have to see whether there is any future scope of work and whether we can give employment to so many workers including the private pool workers. Seeing the work at the Paradip Port the future scope of work is not very, very encouraging where we can employ so many workers continuously. On these considerations, the private pool s continun continuing and they are employed by the Clearing and Forwarding Agents as and when they are required.

SHRI BASUDEB MOHAPATRA: Sir, my second supplementry is divided into two parts. Perhaps, the Minister is aware that payments made to the unlisted workers are ultimately borne by the Paradip Port account. Though the private pool is being managed by the representatives of the Clearing and Forwarding Agents and Unions at Paradip, yet there are a lot of allegations that the unlisted workers are not being paid their dues regularly. Though the Paradip Port authorities are not connected with these payments, why they are giving the work to these agents and the unions?

Secondly, when other Ports are getting the facility of Dock Labour Board, why the same facility has been denied in the case of Paradip Port? The hon. Minister has stated that due to some reasons it has not yet been decided to constitute the Dock Labour Board at the Paradip Port. May I know the reasons ?

SHRI RAJESH PILOT : Sir, about the first part, I have already stated in my written answer that the private pool of clearing and forwarding agents is jointly managed by the representatives of the clearing and forwarding agents and unions. Paradip authorities are not at all connected with the payments to the workers.

Regarding his second part of the question, there had been different views on the Dock Labour Boards. If he goes back to the history, Dock Labour Boards were initially thought of to see that the welfare of the workers are looked after and they have some security in working at the Dock. This was started during the British period and slowly all over the world this system is being phased out. We have also appointed a Committee headed by Mr Sathe known as Major Ports Reforms Committee which also recommended that we must abolish the Dock Labour Board even in the 7 Ports which are existing now. This matter is still under our consideration and the Government has not yet taken a final decision. But let me assure the hon. Member that the welfare of the workers at

the 3 Ports where the Dock Labour Board is not existing, the Port authorities take care of the welfare of the workers on the Dock.

SHRI BASUDEB MOHAPATRA: Sir, my first part of the question has not been answered.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You cannot put two questions in one supplementary.

SHRI BASUDEB MOHAPATRA: When the unlisted workers are not connected with the Paradip Port, then, why payment of these workers is borne on the Paradip account?

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: the private pool of clearing and forwarwarding agents is totally a private system and the workers working in the private pool are handled by them and not by the Port authorities.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Mr Bir Bhadra Pratap Singh. Mr. Singh the question is about the Paradip Port.

SHRI BIR BHADRA PRATAP SINGH: All right, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Kindly do remember.

SHRI BIR BHADRA PRATAP SINGH: I assure you I Will never be irrelevant.

It is not only a question of the Welfare of workers but it is also an exploitation of the workers.

MR. CHAIRMAN: This is about the port Workers.

SHRI BIR BHADRA PRATAP SINGH: Yes, about the Paradip port workers and it is one of the ten major ports in the country. It is not only at Paradip but at other ports also they are exploiting the Workers and that is the thrust of the question. The prevalent practice of making use of the casual labourers at Paradip Port from other ports is in violation of the existing Government's declared policy. May I know from the Minister whether the so-called suppliers of casual labourers are in collusion with the port officials to ensure that these workers are paid less wages and given no facilities? That is the major reason for deviation.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What is your question ?

SHRI BIR BHADRA PRATAP SINGH: In view of the three or four observations that I have made, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether he would consider seriously constituting a Dock Labour Board at the Paradip Port. If not, what is the alternative solution for this?

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: Sir, as I said earlier, welfare of the workers is one of our concerns. If the morale of the workers is not high we cannot increase our productivity. Just for the information, of the House for the first time, we are going to touch a record handling of 140 million tonnes which is the total capacity available in all the major ports. This means the morale of the workers is very high. I do not know what the hon. Member meant by exploitation of the workers, whether it is by the unions or by the Government. As far as the Government is concerned, we are putting our best efforts to improve the conditions of the workers.

Regarding the Dock Labour Board, as I said earlier, this point has been discussed at the various forums. The Major Ports Reforms Committee has already recommended that we must abolish the Dock Labour Board from the 7 Ports where they are existing now. So the Government is considering all these views. The welfare of the workers is upper-most in our mind.

SHRI KAPIL VERMA: Sir, I had the opportunity of visiting certain Ports last month and I did study their working. One main advantage of the Dock Labour Board is that there is representation of the workers and the unions on the Board so that they can look after the interests of the workers. If the Government is going to abolish the Dock Labour Board how are they going to ensure workers' participation and how will their interests be taken care of?

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: I have just mentioned that this is one of the recommendations of the Reforms Committee. The Government has not taken a decision that we are going to abolish.

SHRI KAPIL VERMA: If you implement it, is there any representation of the workers in new-machinery? How is it monitored as far as the workers are concerned?

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: In the Paradip Port, the organization, the Paradip Port Cargo-handling Workers' Association represents the workers. Wherever there is no Dock Labour Board, we have representation of the workers.

PROF. CHANDRESH P. THAKUR: Sir, the hon. Minister has said that a Committee has reported on the functioning of the Dock Labour Board. I hope he will not take an early decision that it will be abolished. What is happening in the port is unfortunate. But the working of the Labour Board needs a very dispassionate review. This forum which has been working for quite some time, as my colleague, Mr. Verma, said, is a tripartite body where workers are represented and there is no doubt that in the handling of port work, workers are a key factor. It is also true that they are subjected to all kinds of exploitation. The Minister casually asks, "Exploitation by whom?" It may be the agencies, the union or the Port. Regardless of the agency, there is exploitation. It should be the concern of the Government. To the extent that the Dock Labour Board, as a tripartite body, is a forum where the workers' interest is represented, it will be unfortunate if it is abolished and a corresponding suitable safeguard system is not allowed. Added to that, I would like to say...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Put your question, please.

PROF. CHANDRESH P. THAKUR: I am coming to that. In any case, there is enough time today, I suppose. I am coming to the question. We realise that the traffic at the port will grow and it should grow because the total targets are increasing. We also require that technical efficiency at the port should improve. There should be the modern technological support there. Keeping in these view, what are the consequences for workers, in terms of job opportunities, in terms of getting sufficient, workable, conditions of employment and man-days actually working on gainful employment in a year? The Minister is just escaping the point that the port does not have a board because other boards are to be abolished. What is the total perspective that is coming?

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: Sir, I have noted the hon. Member's views as far as the Dock Labour Board is concerned. In fact, because of these things the Government has not taken any decision yet. I have just mentioned in the House that different views are coming. Mr. Chairman, Sir, you will agree that in today's international shipping, ports have to be competitive. We should get more from the ports and do better for the workers. It certainly cannot be that you go on creating employment but the earnings do not come through. We have taken a balanced view.

SHRI KAPIL VERMA: Safeguard the interests of the workers also.

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: We have taken a balanced view where the interests of the workers are taken care of as well as those of the port. As far as the Paradip Port is concerned, this system has functioned very well there and people are happy with the system which is prevailing there at the moment.

Outstanding demurrage charges of Bombay Port Trust

*104. SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) what are the outstanding demurrage charges of Bombay Port Trust pending for over one year from various public sector organisations; what are the names of the parties in cases where dues exceed Rs. 30 lakh;

(b) whether it is a fact that the Bombay Port Trust has to recover over Rs. 70 lakh from the NAFED; what are the details of these dues;

(c) whether BPT proposes to recover any amount from NAFED out of the above dues; if so, what are the details thereof; and

(d) what are the details of action the Bombay Port Trust has taken to recover the dues of public sector companies in general and NAFED in particular; if no action has been taken, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJESH PILOT): (a) to (d) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) Demurrage charges due on any consignment are assessed only when the parties come up for its clearance or when the sale account is finalised after the uncleared consignment is sold in auction. As per the sale accounts finalised so far, an amount of Rs. 68.46 lakhs is pending as outstanding demurrage charges for over one year from various public sector organisations.

The names of the parties where the dues exceed Rs. 30 lakhs are given below:—

1. National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd.
2. Steel Authority of India Ltd.
3. Industrial Tube Containers.
4. R.L. Chemicals.
5. G.K. Industries.
6. Transocean Shipping Agency.
7. Dharmesh Metal Pressing.
8. Ganesh Steel Allied.
9. Vedson Steel Wires.
10. Shivshankar Steel.
11. Lifo International.
12. Britania Industries.
13. Staco Bombay.

(b) Yes Sir. These outstanding dues are on account of port charges incurred on 10,000 bags of white cement imported in November, 1984.

(c) and (d) The consignments were sold to recover the port charges. However, as the amount realised was not sufficient to recover the port charges fully, a notice demanding the payment has been issued to NAFED. Suits have been filed for recovery of port dues from public sector undertakings.

SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: Sir, there are many defaulters as for paying demurrage charges to the Bombay Port Trust. In the reply, 13 parties have been mentioned and the outstanding demurrage charges come to about Rs. 70